Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources

Annual Accountability Report For The Fiscal Year 2003-04

Report DNR 2004–2
December 2004

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1. Accountability Statement

The accountability report of the Department of Natural Resources, for the year ended March 31, 2004, has been prepared pursuant to the *Provincial Finance Act* and government policy and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes against (Natural Resources') business plan information for the fiscal year 2003-04.

The reporting of department outcomes necessarily includes estimates, judgments and opinions by department management and staff. We acknowledge that this accountability report is the responsibility of department management. The report is, to the extent possible, a complete and accurate representation of outcomes relative to the goals and priorities set out in the department's business plan for the year.

original signed by
Minister - Richard Hurlburt

original signed by
Deputy Minister - Peter Underwood

2. Message From The Minister

The department's Annual Accountability Report covers the year that ended on March 31, 2004, and was prepared under my direction on behalf of the department. We are providing a report, along with every other department, to show our performance during the past fiscal year. This is the department's fourth accountability report, which is mandated under the *Provincial Finance Act*. This report provides Nova Scotians with an opportunity to compare our 2003-04 accomplishments to the commitments that we made in our 2003-04 Business Plan.

Although I was only appointed Minister of Natural Resources in August 2003, I have quickly become aware of the department's wide range of responsibilities. The many challenges created by Hurricane Juan illustrate the degree that our natural resources are affected by climate and the weather. The achievements made over the last year, despite these challenges, show how the department, and the government, is committed to the sustainable management of our natural resources and to the sound administration of our Crown land. As Minister, I am anxious to address the challenges that lie ahead and look forward to reporting on our accomplishments a year from now.

3. Introduction

This document reports on the priorities and performance measures identified in the department's 2003-04 business plan, which can be accessed at http://www.gov.ns.ca/natr/businessplan/default.htm.

There are two purposes to this document. First, the document allows the department to meet our legislated responsibility for outcomes reporting required under the *Provincial Finance Act*. Second, and most importantly, the document allows the department to show its accomplishments and results achieved.

The principal responsibility of the department is the management of natural resources (forests, wildlife, minerals, parks) and Crown lands in the province. When reviewing this document, readers should recognize and be aware of several facts.

First, Nova Scotia has the second lowest proportion of Crown lands of all provinces and territories, at approximately 28% of the province's land mass. Strong public expectations and numerous competing demands for the use and purpose of this limited public land and resource base creates is an on-going issue that the department recognizes and considers in its decision making. Although the province has acquired several very significant properties during this year, and in past years, the fact remains that a relatively small proportion of the province is publicly owned.

Second, each year the department's previous accountability reports have provided a caution that the unpredictability of nature is a continuous influence on departmental operations, that weather patterns and climatic conditions vary greatly from year to year, and that this can have a significant impact on departmental priorities, resources and budgets. In 2003-04, Hurricane Juan showed just how much of an impact the weather could have on the department's operations. As previously stated, forest fires, insect infestations, wildlife and forest health, and park attendance are, and were, affected by the weather.

Third, due to the location of the majority of our natural resources, the department has a higher profile in the province's rural areas, and a more rural focus. Our foundation industries are key contributors to the economic health of the province, particularly in the rural parts of Nova Scotia. There is an ongoing need for the department to heighten public awareness and understanding, particularly among urban populations, regarding the economic importance of our natural resources to rural populations and the province of Nova Scotia, and how the sustainable management of our resources is carried out.

Finally, the department is responsible for significant infrastructure, such parks, trails, fire towers, buildings, vehicles, and equipment. It is a continuing challenge to maintain this essential aging infrastructure that is required for the department's operations.

4. Department Progress and Accomplishments

The department's broad goals that were included in the 2003-04 Business Plan are listed below. These are to:

- achieve sound natural resources stewardship;
- conserve the diversity of Nova Scotia's natural environment;
- support Nova Scotia's economy through the sustainable development of natural resources;
- improve the quality of life in Nova Scotia; and
- manage the department's financial, physical, human, and information resources effectively and efficiently.

The department's activities were allocated to one of three core business areas. These core business areas were:

- Natural Resources Management;
- Crown Lands Administration; and
- Infrastructure and Support Services.

The following paragraphs report on accomplishments during 2003-04 for each priority listed for each of the three core business areas in the department's 2003-04 Business Plan.

a) Natural Resources Management

- Continue to Implement the Forest Strategy

  The Forest Strategy consists of nine major policy, program and regulatory elements, the focus of which is on achieving sustainable forestry and forest use in the province. In 1998, changes were made to the *Forests Act* to introduce the concept of sustainable forestry and to provide the authority needed to implement the Forest Strategy.

  The Code of Forest Practice principles document entitled " A Framework for the Implementation of Sustainable Forest Management" has undergone a public review process, further revisions and has been reviewed by the Forest Technical Advisory Committee (FTAC) and Department staff and is in final draft form awaiting Minister approval for release to the public.

  The preparation and release of the State of the Forest Report has been deferred to 2005-06 (as reported in the department's 2004-05 Business Plan).

  Enhancements to the Wood Buyers Registry database to incorporate the Wood Acquisition Plan program changes for wood chip requirements were completed and implemented for the 2004 calendar year.

  Changes to the Forest Sustainability Regulations and the Registration and Statistical Returns Regulations with respect to wood chips, metric reporting and various technical changes were completed and approved by Cabinet on January 16, 2004

  Over the year the FTAC met to discuss and review components of the Code of Forest Practice. The "Framework" document was endorsed by FTAC and released as a public document (in October 2004). Draft guidebooks have been reviewed and initial comments are being addressed. In addition the FTAC dealt with changes to regulations and the annual review of silviculture credits.

  As part of Wood Acquisition Plan monitoring for 2003-04, a total of 947 silviculture sites that were completed in 2002 were monitored for compliance. Of the sites monitored, 153 (16%) did not meet technical standards and 74 (8%) had boundary issues. As a result, a total of 849,702 credits were deducted from Registered Buyer accounts.

- Provide Support For a Viable and Sustainable Mineral Industry in the Province

  During 2003-04 tenders for the first four surface coal resources were issued in December 2003, and completed in March 2004. Recommendations to the Minister were in preparation at that time.

  Tenders for a consultant to help prepare a tender for the Donkin resource closed in February 2004 and recommendations were made before the end of March. Department staff continue to sit on a steering committee with DEVCO to monitor

and inform government on progress with environmental remediation of DEVCO lands.

The amendments to the *Mineral Resources Act* were not proclaimed in 2003-04 (they were proclaimed in November 2004). Discussions regarding further revisions to the *Mineral Resources Act* have been deferred to coincide with the development of the provincial mineral development strategy, which will provide an opportunity for consultation and analysis and a strategic context for the revisions.

Discussions were held with senior officials in the Office of Economic Development to define a process and schedule for the mineral development strategy. Work on the strategy will proceed in 2004-05 and extend into 2005-06. The development of a new strategic plan for geoscience was also deferred, in order to coincide with the development of the provincial mineral development strategy, which will provide context for the geoscience plan.

In November 2003, the department signed a two-year letter of agreement with Natural Resources Canada to participate in a geoscience project in central Nova Scotia as part of the federal government's Targeted Geoscience Initiative, Phase 2 (TGI-2). The letter of agreement defines activities by the department in the project which will be funded by some $334,000 in federal funds that will be transferred to the department from Natural Resources Canada.

Consolidation of services to a single facility is an integral part of the planned alternative service delivery for providing clients with access to the department's holdings of drill core and geological specimens. In 2003-04, the Mineral Resources Branch completed an assessment of core and sample holdings in remote facilities located in West Paradise and Debert as an initial step in consolidating all holdings at the facility in Stellarton. Work was initiated in September 2003 to withdraw from the West Paradise building. This will be completed by September 2004.

- Continue Integrated Resource Management Planning on Crown Lands

  Crown lands account for just over one quarter of the province's land mass. Integrated Resource Management, or IRM, is the department's approach to making land-use decisions for Crown land that incorporates the broad range of resource values and land uses on Crown lands. IRM enables DNR to take into account the relationships between the various land uses and resource values, and the effects of management practices and decisions on these uses and values. IRM consists of two components:

  - a planning component which identifies known resource and land-use values, sets goals and objectives, and provides management frameworks for geographic areas of Crown land; and,

  - a process to review information and making management decisions.

    During 2002-03, the department initiated a Long Range Management Framework (LRMF) Pilot Project in the Mulgrave Plateau ecodistrict (in Guysborough County). The LRMF Pilot Project in the Mulgrave Plateau was complex and involved many new challenges. Establishing and working with a public advisory committee, the development of the LRMF planning process itself, and building new working relationships for staff took time and involved

many complexities. Combined with the fact that Nova Scotia has unique Crown land issues, the LRMF process is providing a 'made-in-Nova Scotia' approach to Crown land management.

Significant progress was made in 2003-04, with the following work completed:

- Draft ecological management guidelines, which provide the basis for LRMFs, were completed, tested and put into practice by incorporating them into the preparation of the draft Mulgrave Plateau Pilot LRMF.

- A draft LRMF for the Mulgrave Plateau ecodistrict was prepared by the LRMF project team for the Mulgrave Plateau, and an internal review by DNR staff was initiated.

- A formal assessment of the Department's document *Guidelines for the Development of Long Range Management Frameworks* did not begin however an informal evaluation of the guidelines was continually underway as the various stages of the LRMF work were undertaken and completed.

- The next ecodistricts to have LRMFs prepared were identified for internal planning purposes. There are 39 ecodistricts in the province. Each of DNR's three administrative regions has developed a priorized list of ecodistricts based on considerations that include: departmental obligations / commitments, effective utilization of public regional advisory committees, size of ecodistrict, amount of Crown land in the ecodistrict, existing information, and the capacity to undertake work.

- Provide an Effective Parks and Recreation Program

Perhaps the single most significant event for 2003-04 was Hurricane Juan. Over 30 provincial parks were impacted by Juan. From September to March many resources were re-directed to repairing and restoring provincial parks for the 2004 park season. By the end of March significant progress had been made to secure public safety and finalize infrastructure repairs however the majority of work will occur during 2004-05.

"Operational Standards and Guidelines" for provincial parks were reviewed to provide more current facility and infrastructure management requirements in provincial parks. The implementation of the new standards and guidelines were for the 2004 operating season

The department concluded the acquisition of 1.8 hectare of land adjacent to Blomidon Provincial Park to enhance overall park objectives and secure additional coastal frontage on the Minas Basin. The department has identified other acquisition priorities to pursue and review ongoing land transactions for parks and recreation values. On the other side of the North Mountain, additional inventory collection was completed for Cape Split through a partnership with the Atlantic Canada Conservation Data Collection Centre.

The management plan for McNabs and Lawlor Island Provincial Park was completed by the Ministerial Advisory Committee. The department also continued to work with the Shubenacadie Canal Commission to foster a positive working relationship.

Partnerships remain an effective manner in which to enhance park program development and delivery with over 50 active in 2003-04. New partnerships developed in 2003-04 included the Shubenacadie Canal Commission, Chester Municipality, and Woodens River Environmental Association.

Hurricane Juan impacted all parks within the Halifax Regional Municipality and management agreements could not be signed until outstanding issues in individual parks were addressed. As a result, no partnership agreements were signed for Crystal Crescent, Cole Harbour Heritage Park, and Second Lake. Management plans are still under development for Second Lake, Cole Harbour, West Mabou, and Maitland; the redirection of resources to deal with the aftermath of Hurricane Juan has caused delays. Partnership agreements will not be signed until the management plans have been completed.

Many other partnerships involved trail development along former rail corridors. Specific projects were also enhanced in parks resulting from partnerships, such as:

- viewing platform at Mavilette Beach, Digby County
- group use area at T.H. Raddall, Queens County
- Eatonville development and ongoing operation of Cape Chignecto Provincial Park, Cumberland County.

Additional partnerships were also developed inside government. An example was the conclusion of a Mystery Shop program by Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage specifically designed for provincial parks.

In addition to formalized partnerships, the department had great success in the Parks Are For People program using volunteers and staff partner to delivery over 150 individual park activities to more than 25,000 people. Arrangements made between Mira River Provincial Park and Fortress Louisbourg was a significant new addition.

Through the department's Parks and Recreation Division, Nova Scotia remained an active participant in the Canadian Parks Council with discussions on issues such as biodiversity, protected areas management, national training for park managers, economic analysis of park and protected areas and best practices.

- Conserve Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat

Additions to the *Endangered Species Act* over the past year include Northern Ribbon Snake, Boreal Felt Lichen, Tuberculed Spike Rush and the mainland population of Moose, bringing the total number of listed species to 24. An interim recovery team for mainland Moose was formed and recovery plans were revised for Blandings Turtle and Roseate Tern. Recovery actions continue for several species, notably marten in Cape Breton and coastal plain plants in Southwestern Nova Scotia. A small group of rare lichen species were assessed and draft ranks were assigned using methods of the General Status of Wild Species, bringing the total number of all species assessed in the province to well over 2,500.

Staff began negotiating a bilateral agreement with the federal agencies responsible for the implementation of Canada's *Species at Risk Act* with the objective of

outlining a coordinated and cooperative approach to protection and recovery of listed species in Nova Scotia.

Monitoring of the abundance and harvest of game species was completed. The results of the monitoring were used in the annual review of the hunting and trapping regulations under the *Wildlife Act*. The number of antlerless deer permits was reduced by 4,700 due to a continued decline in population throughout much of the province. A new deer management sub-zone was introduced in the coastal region of Lunenburg county in order to allow additional antlerless permits in this area which is experiencing an over-abundant deer population. An additional three day winter season was added in northern Cape Breton to deal with a high moose population causing nuisance and safety problems in local communities and the bear season was extended by five weeks to provide additional recreational hunting opportunity and as a means of reducing bear abundance and associated problems.

The department and its partners in the Eastern Habitat Joint Venture (EHJV) delivered more than $1,000,000 to the wetland conservation program in Nova Scotia. A total of 82 acres were acquired through direct purchase and an additional 5,727 acres was acquired by the department through the Owners Unknown process. An additional 731 acres were enhanced and brought under landowner agreements.

Agricultural and coastal habitat stewardship to conserve valuable wetland habitat was the focus of the EHJV Wetland Stewardship Program. Many new partnerships were formed under the *Kings County Wetland Conservation Initiative* - an initiative that promotes an agricultural industry that is dynamic and viable practising sustainable agro- ecosystem management that conserves and restores species and ecosystem biodiversity at the watershed level.

The department and its EHJV partners continued to be centrally involved with the *NS-NB Bay of Fundy Shorebird Project*. Project staff identified key coastal habitats of migratory shorebirds and met with the landowners of sensitive land in an effort to raise awareness and secure conservation agreements. Conservation initiatives yielded shorebird stewardship agreements for 32 parcels (~293 acres) and acquisition of eight parcels (~171 acres) in Nova Scotia.

The department is supporting, with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and other partners, a PhD candidate and a MSc candidate in two overlapping multi-year research projects on wildlife responses to agroecosystem management in Nova Scotia. We also continued to collaborate with the Canadian Space Agency and other partners to demonstrate the use of remote sensing technology and new analytical tools as a cost effective measure to update our wetlands inventory.

Thirteen projects were approved for funding under the Habitat Conservation Fund for a total of $111,645. This money is used by conservation organizations and individuals for the protection and enhancement of wildlife habitat. The Species at Risk Fund continued to receive funding from the Conservation License Plate but project submissions have not been requested as the fund has not yet reached a sufficient level.

An Agreement with Ducks Unlimited Canada was negotiated by DNR and approved by Executive Council. It enables a cooperative undertaking at the Shubenacadie Provincial Wildlife Park which will provide for a new interpretative and educational

centre, expanded trail system and public access to an upgraded marsh which will enhance public awareness of wetland habitats and waterfowl. Construction is expected in 2005.

- Utilize Department Information and Expertise

A key responsibility of the department is the provision of information on our resource sectors to stimulate private sector investment. Forty-seven new digital geoscience information products, comprising three databases and 44 open file maps, were released in 2003-04. All of these are available as downloads from the department website website. In 2003-04, 39,022 digital products were downloaded from the website. This is a 106% increase from the 18,921 products downloaded in 2002-03. The increase in the number of digital downloads is significant because it shows that the mineral sector is increasing its usage of the department's information products for their exploration plans, which could ultimately lead to actual development projects.

Five meetings were held with municipal and regional economic development agencies to provide information about potential mineral development. Presentations ranged from general information about local geology and mineral resources to advice about specific commodities and proposed developments.

Department staff worked cooperatively with the Office of Economic Development, Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation (ECBC) and the Strait-Highlands Regional Development Agency on a project to assist owners of carbonate deposits in Cape Breton Island in marketing the deposits to prospective clients. This included a contracted study of the potential of the deposits, funded by ECBC, and detailed geoscientific work (trenching, sampling, analyses) on deposits in advance of a visit by a representative of a Belgian-based, international industrial minerals company.

Approximately $50,000 was spend on remediation of abandoned mine openings in the Central Region (Oldham, Moose River, Stellarton and Montague) and Eastern (Glenelg, Port Hood, Ironville, Upper Seal Harbour) regions. In addition, opportunities for partnerships resulted in remediation of openings at North Brookfield, Molega, and Oldham.

The expertise of department staff was effectively utilized after Hurricane Juan swept through the province early on September 29, 2003 to provide valuable information on the extent of damage to the province's forests in the damage area. Aerial reconnaissance and photographs were taken around the track of the hurricane across the central part of the province.

A website was created that provided digital orthophotographic images of the entire hurricane damage area, and which can be accessed by the public. The site provides members of the public with images that can be viewed at any scale taken following Hurricane Juan, and which can be used to assess blowdown damage. The site is available at http://gis2.gov.ns.ca/website/juan/viewer.htm.

In co-operation with the Nova Forest Alliance, department staff have completed and published the first Forest Ecosystem Classification manual which covers the Model forest area in the central region of the province. The manual provides forest

practitioners and the public with a tool to classify forest stands/ecosystems from the ground to assist them in making decisions about their forest.

- Meet National Obligations

  In 2003-04, department staff worked to format department data in the Canadian Geoscience Knowledge Network (CGKN) metadata standard and to develop computer programs and protocols to make the data available on the CGKN website. NSDNR staff also participated in the annual CGKN w rkshop and planning session in Toronto in March 2004. The national catalogue was launched in March 2004 and is available through the department's website.

  The National Orphaned and Abandoned Mines Program is a joint industry-government initiative to address the legacy of orphaned/abandoned mines in Canada with all the associated issues such as environmental liability, human health concerns and the financial cost of clean-up. The Program continued work on policy-related matters on a national scale. DNR contributed a $5,000 membership and information on policy and regulation.

  Nova Scotia successfully hosted the annual Energy and Mines Ministers Conference in Halifax from September 28, 2003 to October 1, 2003, despite Hurricane Juan. Over three hundred delegates attended, with more than 150 representatives of federal, provincial and territorial governments, and with over 150 private sector delegates and accompanying guests. This was one of the largest registrations ever for the conference.

  During the year, departmental staff chaired or co-chaired national meetings of the Intergovernmental Working Group on Mining, the National Geological Surveys Committee, the Committee of Provincial Geologists and the Director of Mines Committee.

  Canada was the host nation for the XII World Forest Congress which was held in Quebec City from September 21 to 28, 2003. The Congress, whose general theme was "Forests, Source of Life", attracted more than 4,000 participants from 140 countries. The department was an exhibitor at the Congress, with a display showing the province's progress and accomplishments towards sustainable forest management. Federal / Provincial / Territorial meetings for Forestry Ministers and Wildlife Ministers (as well as Fisheries Ministers) were also held in Quebec in September 2003 to coincide with the World Forest Congress.

  The National Forest Information System (NFIS) is an information infrastructure that contains the necessary information to demonstrate sustainable forest management practices across Canada. Establishment of the NFIS was requested by the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers (CCFM) in August 2000. The NFIS went operational in 2003-04 and information on Nova Scotia's forest resources were made available through this system. This information was taken from the department's extensive collection of forestry related data, which is being updated on an on-going basis. The department is also participating in the plot-based National Forest Inventory program, and this data program will be distributed through the NFIS.

- Provide Forest Protection Services

The fire management program review elements were completed with the exception of one final focus group session with the volunteer fire departments through their Fire Service Association of Nova Scotia. Once this session is completed, options and action items to improve the forest fire service will be addressed. The interaction between associated agencies involved with fighting forest fires has been invaluable.

The integrated pest management program review elements were also completed. A summarization of suggested improvements was recorded and is under review by the group for improving their service to clients. As with the fire management program review, the interaction between associated agencies involved with forest pests was invaluable. A working draft of the pest risk analysis system was completed and it is being field tested in 2004.

As a result of Hurricane Juan in late September 2003, many forest protection activities required a re-evaluation and re-assignment. The new fire related activities included:

- field assessments and evaluations on fire hazard and risk;
- new initial attack preparedness plan;
- re-emphasis on basic fire training and safety as related to downed trees;
- fire indices research to lower criteria when implementing bans on open fires and woods closures
- altering aircraft alerts and positioning for central NS
- implementation of more fire behaviour forecasting
- presentations for volunteer fire departments
- enhancement of wildland urban interface material, including web-based information
- promotion of Canadian FireSmart guidelines around homes and communities; and
- the department chaired a multi-agency communications group (EMO, DEL, HRM Fire & Emergency Services) to better coordinate fire education and safety messages.

The new integrated pest management activities included:

- assistance provided in aerial hurricane stand damage survey techniques;
- research on spruce beetle populations and dispersal in blown down trees; and
- research on survey alterations and infestation of the brown spruce longhorned beetle.

b) Crown Lands Administration

- Provide an Up-to-Date and Responsive Legislative Framework

A draft *Trails Act* was prepared in the fall of 2002 but was deferred due to concerns expressed by some stakeholders. In April 2003, Voluntary Planning accepted a government request to conduct a public consultation and research initiative on off-highway vehicle (OHV) use in Nova Scotia. Further action on the *Trails Act* was been delayed until the OHV recommendations were released.

A preliminary review of the current *Beaches Act* and related policy issues was completed in 2003-04, along with an examination of the legislative regimes being

utilized in other jurisdictions. In addition, a review of Kingsburg Beach was undertaken by a consultant and released to the public.

- Improve Opportunities for Land Acquisition

  During 2003-04, the department had a Tangible Capital Asset (TCA) allocation of $1 million to support acquisitions on behalf of both DNR and DEL. In addition, a special allocation of $14 million supported the acquisition of approximately 40 thousand acres of woodlands in northern Hants County from MacTara Limited.

  Partnerships with non-government conservation organizations (such as the Nature Conservancy of Canada and Ducks Unlimited) resulted in the leveraging of private sector funds for land acquisition, including several inholdings in the Tobeatic.

  A land exchange policy was completed and approved in June 2003.

- Improve Access to Land Information

  Development continued on enhancements to the CLiQS Web Map Service. This system now provides department staff with access to the Crown lands cadastral GIS system, which identifies the Crown land base and certain land base attributes.

  Planning for the migration of Crown lands into the new Land Registration system (Registry 2000) continued. A process and schedule for migration of Crown lands was developed. A committee was formed with representation from Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations and the department to identify a means where ungranted surveyed land can be merged into Registry 2000 in large blocks. In addition, land presently being acquired was immediately entered into the new system beginning with the MacTara purchase.

c) Infrastructure and Support Services

- Infrastructure / Equipment Maintenance and Replacement

  Numerous routine construction, maintenance and repair projects were completed for department buildings, depots, and other facilities during the year. A major scheduled overhaul of the Bell 212 helicopter engine was also carried out

- Provide Ongoing Corporate Services

  A legacy records management system was replaced with ForeMost, an industry standard records management software product. Key among the many benefits from the implementation of ForeMost is that it provides staff in DNR field offices with direct access to the records management system from their desktop computers.

  A local area network with high speed communications link to the Provincial Data Network was installed for the Coxheath and Shubenacadie offices. These provide staff with a significant improvement in information technology capabilities which, in turn, provides business benefits:

  - significant reduction in staff time performing basic tasks like retrieving and responding to email

- access to corporate systems/services - SAP, DNR Records Management, Internet/Intranet services, general internal communications
- improved access to information needed to support the IRM Project.

A conversion to the corporate Government Services Inventory Control system (GSIC) to track departmental assets, was in the initial implementation stage within the department.

5. Financial Results

The department's 2003-04 net program expenditures estimate (after chargeables, fees and recoveries) was $59.2 million. Actual expenditures for the same period were $56.8 million.

Department of Natural Resources - Estimated Budget Expenditures *			
	2002-03	2003-04	
	Estimate	Estimate	Actual
	$ Millions	$ Millions	$ Millions
Total - Gross Expenses	$59.3	$61.6	$61.4
Total - Net Program Expenses	$57.0	$59.2	$56.8
Salaries and Benefits	$37.3	$38.6	$39.5
Funded Staff (in Full Time Equivalents)	863	847	834

* Note that the cost of services provided through the Resources Corporate Services Unit (financial, human resources, and information technology services) to a number of other government departments and agencies is included in the department's budget.

6. Performance Measures

The department has identified a number of performance measures that help track our success in meeting our goals. Performance measurement is an evolving process and we expect that improvements in our measurement system will take place over time. This will include the replacement of existing measures with better measures, and combining or enhancing other existing measures. Because of the number of departmental measures, the information explaining each of our measures and the 2003-04 results are provided in a separate appendix.

7. Supplemental Information

During 2003-04, the department had broad responsibilities for the development, management, conservation and protection of forest, mineral, parks and wildlife resources, and the management of Crown lands. Nova Scotia's natural resources provide significant economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits for all Nova Scotians, especially to rural parts of the province. Our natural resources are one of the province's features that make it an attractive place to live, do business in, and visit. It is our responsibility to ensure that they are managed wisely and that Nova Scotians recognize their value and importance.

The following two tables show Statistics Canada's estimates of average weekly wages for all employees in various sectors for 2001, 2002, and 2003. The first table shows earnings from industries related to forestry and mining, using the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS). For comparative purposes, the second table provides earnings data for some other industries. The figures provided in these tables provide evidence of the relatively high levels of pay enjoyed by workers in the resources sector, compared to earnings in other sectors.

Table 1 - Estimates of Average Earnings (Including Overtime), All Employees (Industries Related to Forestry and Mining Production, Manufacturing and Distribution)

NAICS	Industry	2001	2002	2003
1133	Logging	$603.19	$636.31	$665.52
212	Mining	$856.53	-	-
2121	Coal Mining	$858.73	-	-
3211	Sawmills and Wood Preservation	$596.65	$613.59	$584.42
3221	Pulp, Paper & Paperboard Mills	$1,075.12	$1,047.07	$1,042.47
3273	Cement & Concrete Products Manufacturing	$763.88	$792.28	$922.09
3279	Other Non-metallic Mineral Product Manufacturing	$715.53	-	-
4163	Lumber, Millwork & Other Building Supplies Wholesale-Distribution	$753.52	$694.70	$740.82
4172	Industrial Machinery Equipment & Supplies Wholesale-Distribution	$765.15	$804.88	$774.14
4182	Paper, Paper Products & Disposable Plastic Product Wholesale-Distribution	$786.43	$743.20	$834.78

Source: Annual Estimates of Employment, Earnings and Hours, 1991-2000, Statistics Canada and Table 281-0027 - Average weekly earnings (SEPH) from CANSIM.

Table 2 - Estimates of Average Weekly Earnings (Including Overtime), All Employees (Professional, Educational, Health Care, Culture / Tourism Related, Public Administration)				
NAICS	Industry	2001	2002	2003
54	Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	$778.28	$795.76	$753.00
61	Educational Services	$653.34	$697.12	$693.92
62	Health Care & Social Assistance	$555.00	$581.66	$599.76
711	Performing Arts, Spectator Sports & Related Industries	$321.51	$338.30	$352.11
712	Heritage Institutions	$385.71	$388.68	$406.09
721	Accommodation Services	$288.99	$286.80	$289.08
722	Food Services & Drinking Places	$234.29	$240.42	$242.75
911	Federal Government Public Administration	$906.66	$991.68	$969.33
912	Provincial & Territorial Public Administration	$651.40	$684.89	$711.39
Source: Annual Estimates of Employment, Earnings and Hours, 1991-2000, Statistics Canada and Table 281-0027 - Average weekly earnings (SEPH) from CANSIM.				

Appendix - 2003-04 Performance Measures

Crown Land with Long Range Management Frameworks in Place
Just over one quarter of the province is comprised of provincial Crown lands. One key responsibility of the government is to manage this land wisely. Long-range management frameworks (LRMF) are being developed for all provincial Crown lands administered by the Department of Natural Resources. (Natural Resources is the department that administers most of the province's provincial Crown lands.)

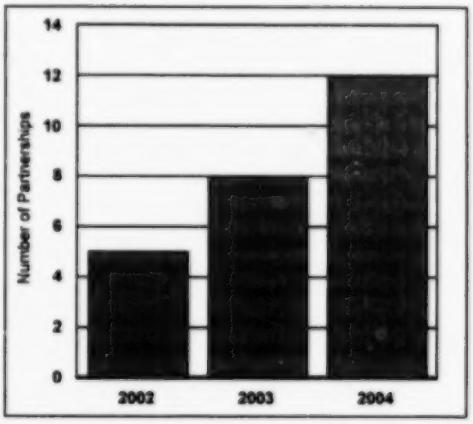
What does the measure tell us?
Long-range management frameworks are being developed to provide a framework for Crown land management and land use decisions. These frameworks will provide a database of information and features for the area included within the plan, and the longer term objectives and goals for the planning area. The frameworks will recognize and consider the special land use features and values and the various interests in the use of Crown lands. These LRMFs will be important tools to help support sound decision making related to use and management of Crown lands. The measure provides a clear indication of the department's progress in getting these frameworks in place.

Where are we now?
The province is categorized into 39 eco-districts. No LRMFs were in place as of March 31, 2004. The LRMF for the Mulgrave Plateau eco-district was substantially completed but was not finalized by the end of the year. This LRMF will be used as a model for the preparation of subsequent frameworks for other eco-districts.

Where do we want to be?
Eventually each of the province's 39 eco-districts will be covered by LRMFs. The department identified a target of 50% of Crown land with LRMFs in place by the end of 2004-05. This target was overly ambitious and we will not reach it by 2004-05. With our current schedule we expect that it will take five to seven years for the department to have the initial long range management frameworks in place for all eco-districts. After the initial plans are in place they will be subject to regular reviews.

"Species at Risk" Partnerships in Place

The Province is committed to the conservation and protection of species at risk provincially and nationally through the *Nova Scotia Endangered Species Act* and the *Accord for the Protection of Species at Risk*. Many of these commitments are made through voluntary stewardship efforts that are linked to government programs. These partnerships are key to the conservation of species at risk and other components of environmental health and contribute to sound natural resources stewardship".



What Does the Measure Tell Us?

This measure is an indicator of our efforts to build and maintain stewardship partnerships for species at risk. As more groups and individuals are engaged in our formal efforts to conserve and protect species at risk we have a better capacity to provide for their maintenance and recovery. The measure is expressed as the number of "major" partnerships in place for species at risk.

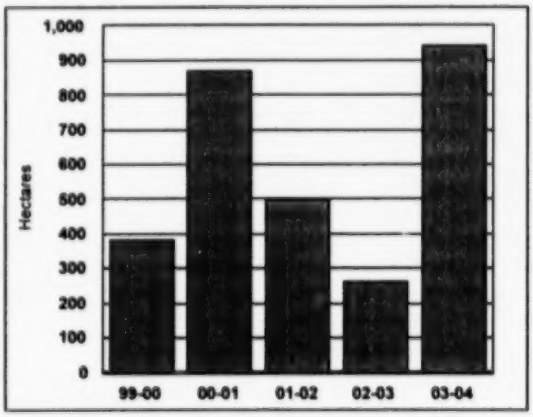
Where Are We Now?

The department had 12 major stewardship partnerships for species at risk in place as of March 31, 2004.

Where Do We Want To Be?

Our target for this measure is to gradually increase the number of major stewardship partnerships in place to somewhere in the 10 to 15 range by 2004-05. Though the development and implementation of recovery plans for species at risk we are working to identify and build partnerships for all species listed under the *Endangered Species Act*.

Wetland Influenced by Wetland Stewardship Agreements



Three key goals of the Department of Natural Resources are *to achieve sound natural resources stewardship, to conserve the diversity of Nova Scotia's natural environment*, and *to improve the quality of life in Nova Scotia.* Wetlands represent less than 7% of the provincial land area yet provide significant environmental, social, and cultural functions. Wetlands continue to be lost and degraded through urban and industrial growth, inappropriate land use activities, and development of transportation and energy corridors. With approximately 75% of the province privately owned, the involvement of landowners in the stewardship of this resource is critical. Stewardship can involve agreements for the restoration and management of wetlands on private land, modification of land use activities to benefit wetlands and wildlife, or the transfer of ownership.

What does the measure tell us?

The measure is the area of wetland and associated wildlife habitat influenced by stewardship agreements concluded during that year, expressed in hectares annually. It provides information on agreements with private landowners related to restoration and/or management of wetlands, or the transfer of land ownership to a wetlands based partnership of conservation organizations.

Where are we now?

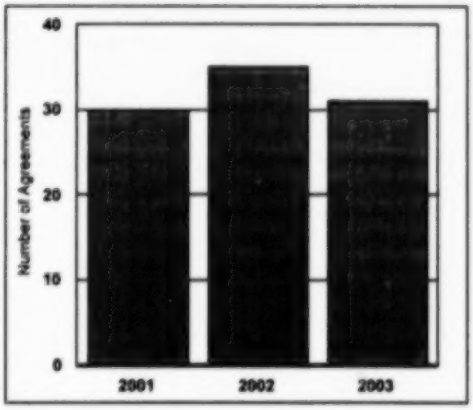
There were 941 hectares of wetlands influenced by wetland stewardship agreements concluded during 2003-04.

Where do we want to be?

The department's target for 2004-05 is 300 hectares. Since these stewardship agreements frequently involve large, discrete blocks of land, it is difficult to accurately forecast where we want to be in the future, other than increasing the area of wetlands covered by agreements. Nova Scotia's wetland conservation initiatives benefit through Natural Resources' involvement in the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. The delivery mechanism of the Plan in Eastern Canada is the Eastern Habitat Joint Venture (EHJV). The NS-EHJV is a cooperative partnership involving various provincial agencies; Canadian Wildlife Service; Wildlife Habitat Canada; Ducks Unlimited Canada; Nature Conservancy of Canada; local non-government agencies; state, federal and non-government agencies in the United States; industry, and private landowners. Success in meeting the target depends upon a combination of available funding through the partnership and land owners willing to participate in agreements.

Registered Buyers Participating in Forest Sustainability Agreements

One measure which gives an indication of private sector commitment to support private woodlot owners in the management of their woodlots is the "number of registered buyers participating in forest sustainability agreements".



What does the measure tell us?

Registered buyers, under the Forest Sustainability Regulations of the *Forests Act*, are responsible to ensure that the required amount of silviculture work is completed on private lands. Forest sustainability agreements are government/private sector funded silviculture programs that offer funding to private woodlot owners. The number of registered buyers that participate in forest sustainability agreements indicates their support in ensuring that a sustainable supply of wood fibre comes from private woodlots, and that proper forest management techniques are adopted by woodlot owners who supply them wood.

Where are we now?

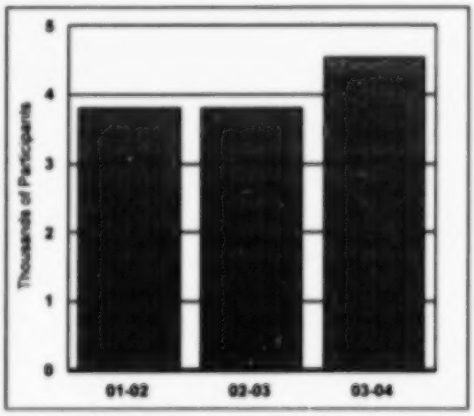
For the calendar year 2003, there were 31 registered buyers that participated in forest sustainability agreements.

Where do we want to be?

The department has a target of 70 forest sustainability agreements in place by the end of 2004. Our goal is to have at least the required number of registered buyers, under the Forest Sustainability Regulations, participating under forest sustainability agreements. A long term goal is to have full participation from all registered buyers, both mandatory and voluntary.

Natural Resources Stewardship Training at the Wildlife Park

Providing natural resources related education to the public and helping the public to better understand natural resources related issues helps to promote sound natural resources stewardship.



What does this measure tell us?

This measure records the number of teachers and students who receive training in wildlife education programs at the Provincial Wildlife Park in Shubenacadie. This training is delivered on-site in a classroom at the Wildlife Park in combination with the captive indigenous wildlife at the Park and is an integral part of the provincial science curriculum. The annual number of students and teachers participating in the various programs offered at the facility is a good indicator of the level of training in wildlife education provided to educators and young people. Annual attendance figures also give an indication of overall satisfaction with the delivery and content of the programs.

Where are we now?

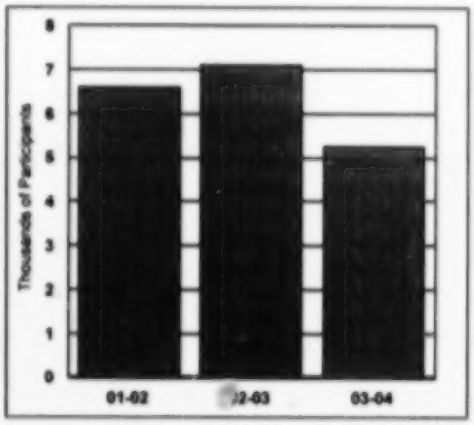
The number of students and teachers who received natural resources related stewardship training at the Provincial Wildlife Park during 2003-04 was 4,530 individuals.

Where do we want to be?

The department's target for this measure for 2004-05 is 7,500 teachers and students attending these programs. It is hoped that in-service training and professional development workshops for teachers, plus improved educational programs for school and youth groups, will lead to an increase in this measure over time.

Natural Resources Stewardship Related Training at the Natural Resources Education Centre

Providing natural resources stewardship training to educators and youth helps to expose these groups to important concepts that they may use and pass along to others.



What does the measure tell us?

The measure reflects the number of teachers, adult leaders, students and youth who have participated in one of the natural resources programs at the Natural Resources Education Centre (NREC) annually. The programs involve pre- and post-visit activities as well as interactive activities as part of the visit to the Centre. Through the Centre and its programs, participants gain a heightened understanding of natural resource issues which contributes to the development of a stewardship ethic.

Where are we now?

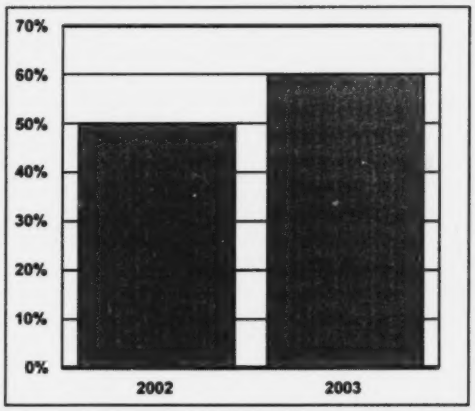
During 2003-04, there were 5,262 persons who participated in training through the Natural Resources Education Centre. Hurricane Juan had a negative impact of the numbers for last fall since the woodlot was inaccessible for field classes.

Where do we want to be?

The department's target is 8,000 teachers and students. While a sustained increase in the number of participants is desirable in future years, increased effort is being placed on reaching teachers, students, youth and youth educators who reside outside of the core service area (which is within a one hour drive of the NREC) through the provision of distance-learning support, in-service training, and outreach activities.

Percentage of Province for Which Forest Resource Data Is Ten Years Old or Less

Sound stewardship of our forest resources is dependent upon the availability of accurate and timely information on the characteristics of these resources. Forests change regularly through management, harvesting and disturbance by pests and fire. It is important to have current information available to resource managers. The provincial forest inventory system provides this information for Nova Scotia on all land ownerships.



What does this measure tell us?

The frequency that forest information is updated is important. This measure tells how much of the province is meeting the target update cycle of every ten years. Updating the forest resource data consists of three major activities. Aerial photographs are taken of approximately 10% of the province. Then staff interpret these photographs. Finally, the results are stored electronically in a geographic information system (GIS).

Where are we now?

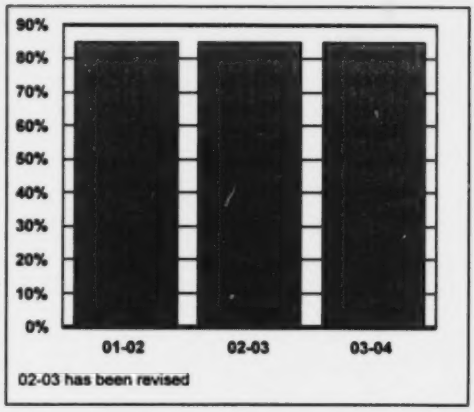
For 2003 the percentage of the province for which forest resource data was ten years old or less was 60%.

Where do we want to be?

The department's target for 2004-05 for this measure is for 100% of the forest resource data to be ten years old or less. Our intention is to continue to modify and improve the forest inventory system to enable the department to maintain a ten year repeat cycle so that 10% of the province is updated each year.

Percentage of Province for Which Geological Maps Are less than 25 Years Old

It is widely accepted in the minerals and hydrocarbons exploration communities that maps which are greater than 25 years old do not reflect advancements in the geological sciences and are, therefore, less useful in exploration for resources. The availability of up-to-date maps for all areas of the province shows that the department is conducting an active mapping program and is supporting the users of these geological maps, including the mineral industry.



What does this measure tell us?

This measure tells us the degree of currency of geological maps produced by the department, which are based on geoscience mapping projects throughout the province. These maps are used by private sector companies to support their exploration programs.

Where are we now?

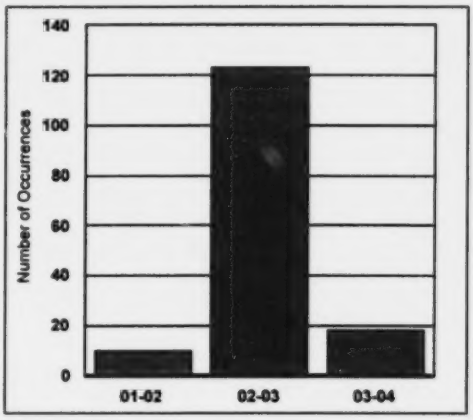
During 2003-04, 85% of the province was covered by geological maps less than 25 years old.

Where do we want to be?

The department's target for 2004-05 is for 85% of the province to be covered by geological maps less than 25 years old.

New Mineral Occurrences Added to the Provincial Mineral Occurrences Database

Information is acquired through the department's geoscience program and from required submissions by private sector companies exploring in Nova Scotia. The cumulative result of this effort is a comprehensive provincial geological and mineral deposit database, which is required by the private sector for the selection of exploration targets and development of exploration strategies.



What does this measure tell us?

This is a measure of the department's level of annual progress in acquiring information on newly discovered mineral occurrences throughout the province.

Where are we now?

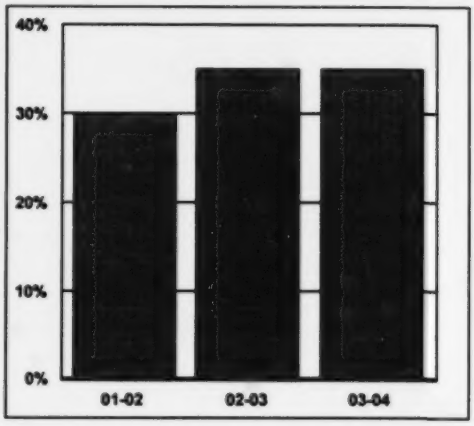
During 2003-04, 18 new mineral occurrences were added to the provincial mineral occurrences database.

Where do we want to be?

The department has identified a target of 25 new occurrences to be added during 2004-05.

Percentage of Province for Which Aggregate Resource Information is Less Than 20 Years Old

Aggregate is a key commodity used by the construction industry and supports economic development throughout the province. Forecasts for infrastructure development (highways, urban roads, residential and commercial construction) suggest that the demand for high quality aggregate will increase markedly in the next decade.



What does this measure tell us?

This measure tells us the degree of currency of information on the province's aggregate resources. The availability of up-to-date aggregate resource information province-wide shows that the department is actively locating and cataloguing new deposits.

Where are we now?

During 2003-04, the percentage of the province for which aggregate resource information was less than 20 years old was 35%.

Where do we want to be?

The department's target for 2004-05 is for 50% of the province to have information on aggregate resources less than 20 years old.

Compliance with the *Wildlife Habitat and Watercourses Protection Regulations*

The *Wildlife Habitat and Watercourses Protection Regulations* (under the *Forests Act*) were developed to maintain fish and wildlife habitats and water quality, in and near forest harvesting operations on all lands. There are three requirements in the Regulations: reduced harvesting along watercourses in Special Management Zones, clumps of living trees left standing in the harvest site and large pieces of woody debris left evenly scattered over the site.

What does the measure tell us?

The percentage of harvesting operations that meet the legal standards is a measure of how well natural environments are being protected and also a measure of the forest operators' knowledge of the Regulations and their commitment to environmental stewardship. A sample of harvest sites will be visited (in conjunction with the sustainable forest management plan audits) to measure compliance with the Regulations. In addition, public complaints about specific harvesting operations will be investigated and an incident report generated detailing the results of the investigation.

Where are we now?

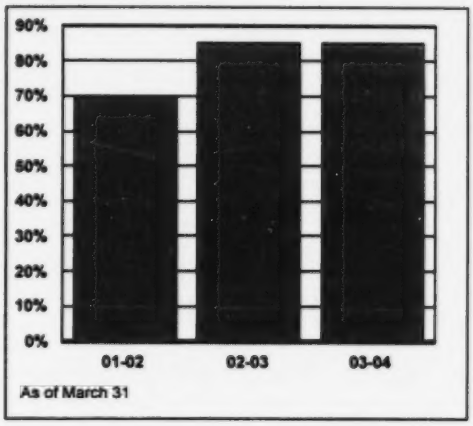
The Regulations came into effect January 14, 2002. During 2002-03 the department concentrated on extension activities to explain the regulations. No data is available for 2003-04. Hurricane Juan and the need to fine-tune the methodology to be used to determine compliance contributed to the delay in data collection.

Where do we want to be?

The department's target is to have 90% compliance by 2004-05. Harvest site visits have taken place in 2004-05 and will be reported in the 2004-05 Accountability Report.

Park Area Meeting IUCN Protection and Natural Areas Criteria

The International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources' (IUCN) is a worldwide organization whose mission is "to influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable".



What does this measure tell us?

The commitment to land conservation is reflected in the percentage of designated provincial parks land that meets the IUCN criteria for contributing to the protection of natural areas. The IUCN criteria is an international standard for ecosystem conservation.

Where are we now?

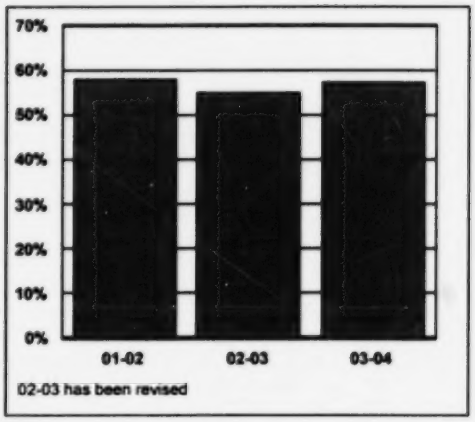
As of March 31, 2004, 85% of provincial park area met the IUCN criteria.

Where do we want to be?

The department has a target of 70% for this measure for 2004-05. This target is based on maintaining the existing level of ecosystem conservation contributed by the provincial parks. Additional park properties will be evaluated using the IUCN criteria as they are considered for designation under the *Provincial Parks Act*.

Percentage of Active Mine Sites Practicing Progressive Reclamation

Reclamation activities allow the restoration of natural ecosystems. Progressive reclamation is continuous reclamation and rehabilitation of mining lands as mining operations continue. Final reclamation is conducted after mining is completed. Progressive reclamation dramatically reduces the amount of land that must be reclaimed at the end of a mining operation.



What does the measure tell us?

The measure represents the percentage of mining operations conducting some form of progressive reclamation. It is a comparison of the number of operating mines in Nova Scotia that are undertaking land reclamation compared to the total number of mines operating in the province. Operating mines are defined under the *Mineral Resources Act* and do not include pits and quarries used for extracting sand and gravel or crushed rock.

Where are we now?

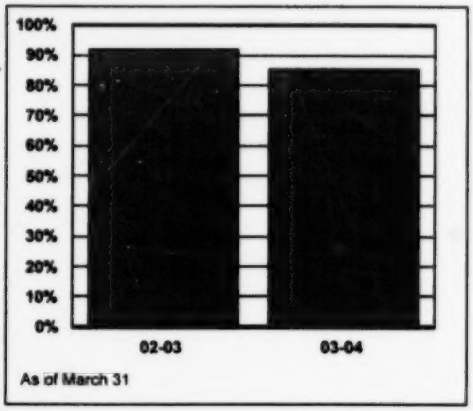
During 2003-04, 57% of the province's active mining operations were utilizing some form of progressive reclamation.

Where do we want to be?

The department's has identified a target of 65% for this measure for 2004-05. Ideally the department would like to see all mining operations utilizing progressive reclamation. However this expectation is unrealistic because underground mines do not operate on the surface, require access to all the facilities throughout the life of the mine, and cannot reclaim surface lands until mining operations are complete. Also, some surface mines started long before progressive reclamation became a common practice. These mines find themselves constrained by past mining plans and operations so that they cannot implement large scale progressive reclamation. The *Mineral Resources Act* requires that all active mines be reclaimed and the government holds a reclamation bond for each mining operation approved under the *Mineral Resources Act*.

Endangered and Threatened Species with Recovery Plans in Place

The department is committed to the conservation and protection of species at risk, provincially and nationally, through the *Nova Scotia Endangered Species Act* and the *Accord for the Protection of Species at Risk*.



What does the measure tell us?

The measure is a straight forward indication of how much work is being done on restoring the health of endangered (and threatened) species. Recovery plans are the focal instrument for addressing the recovery needs for species at risk and guide governments, recovery teams and others, in their conservation efforts, and are now being prepared as required in the *Endangered Species Act*. Recovery plans establish, for each endangered and threatened species, what needs to be done, how much it will cost, when it will be done and who will do the work. The plans also set goals for what is required to down-list a species at risk and establish a strategy for attaining these goals. (To down-list a species means to move it to a lower risk category, such as from endangered to threatened.)

Where are we now?

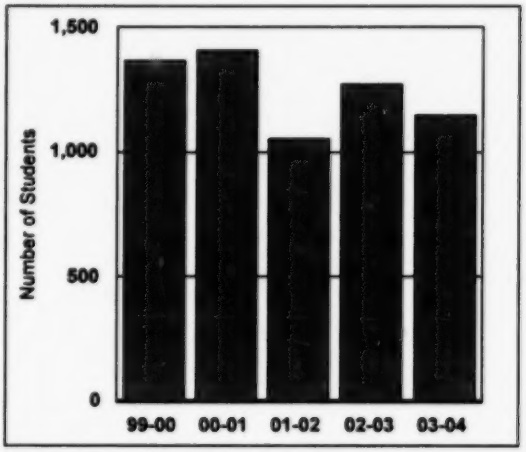
As of March 31, 2004 there were 19 species listed as either endangered or threatened under our *Endangered Species Act*. Of these, 14 species were required to have recovery plans in place by March 31, 2004 (the 12 species listed as endangered in 2000, 2001, and 2002 and the two species listed as threatened in 2000 and 2001). Plans were in place for 12 of the 14, or 86% as of the end of the 2003-04 fiscal year, compared to 11 of 12 species at the end of 2002-03 (this included one threatened species listed in July 2001). Detailed information on the province's species at risk can be found at http://www.gov.ns.ca/natr/wildlife/endngrd/specieslist.htm.

Where do we want to be?

Our target is to have recovery plans in place for all (100%) species listed under the Act by 2004-05 or sooner. The recovery plans are to be in place for each endangered species within one year after the species was listed as being endangered, and within two years for those species listed as being threatened.

Students Successfully Trained in Hunter and Trapper Safety

The mandatory training requirements for persons who wish to hunt provides for public safety by ensuring that persons who do hunt are trained in the safe handling, storage and transportation of a firearm or bow and that they understand the Provincial hunting laws. Additionally, these courses provide them with instruction in field safety, and wildlife conservation and identification, and promote respect for private lands and landowner concerns, as well as the development of positive hunter ethics.



What does the measure tell us?

This measure tracks the number of persons who are trained each year in hunter safety and trapper education courses. Any resident of Nova Scotia who wishes to hunt with a firearm or a bow in the province is required to take a hunter education course or a bowhunter education course. A trapper education course is required for those persons who wish to obtain a trappers license.

Where are we now?

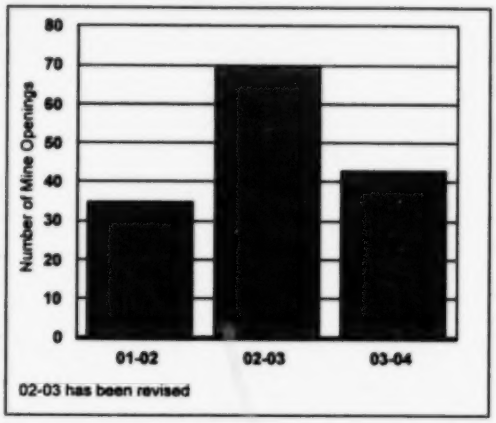
The delivery of the Nova Scotia hunter education course is coordinated for the department by the Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers and Hunters while the bowhunter education course is delivered through the Bowhunter Instructors Association of Nova Scotia. The trapper education course is delivered through the Trappers Association. During 2003-04 there were 845 persons who completed the hunter education course training, 189 persons who completed the bowhunter education course, and 115 individuals who took the trapper education course. The total number trained was 1,149 persons during 2003-04.

Where do we want to be?

The department identified a target of 1,350 individuals receiving hunter and trapper training during 2004-05. This figure is based on the number of students seeking training in hunter education returning to traditional levels of approximately 1,000 students annually.

High Risk Abandoned Mine Openings Remediated on Crown Lands

Remediation means securing the mine opening by capping, filling or fencing. By remediating abandoned mine openings, the department decreases the risk to those people traveling over or working on Crown lands.



What does the measure tell us?

The department is working to locate abandoned mine openings and safeguard the public from the hazards associated with these openings. The measure of work performed is the number of abandoned mine openings remediated each year. The number of openings remediated may vary year to year depending on the site specific conditions of the openings.

Where are we now?

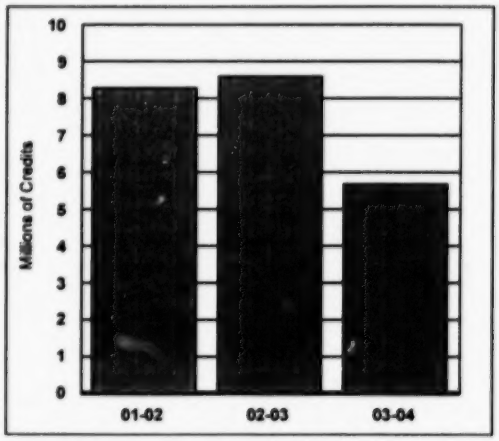
During 2003-04, 43 high risk abandoned mine openings were remediated. Work was done through the Abandoned Mine Openings Program and through cooperative efforts within government (with other departments).

Where do we want to be?

Eventually the department would like to have all identified abandoned mine openings on Crown land remediated. In the short term we will concentrate on remediating the high risk abandoned mine openings located on Crown land. Originally the department identified a target of five mine openings to be remediated during 2004-05. This target was increased to 44 high risk abandoned mine openings to be remediated annually on Crown lands, reflecting an expanded definition of the measure (there was also a change in the terminology used, from mine shafts to mine openings).

Silviculture Investment on Small Private Woodlots

This measure gives a quantitative measure of silviculture activity. Based on how the program that funds this silviculture activity operates, a silviculture credit value is used instead of a dollar amount.



What does the measure tell us?

The measure using silviculture credits indicates the value of total silviculture activity rather than the actual costs to achieve that level of silviculture activity. Different silviculture treatments are given different silviculture credit values on a per hectare basis.

Where are we now?

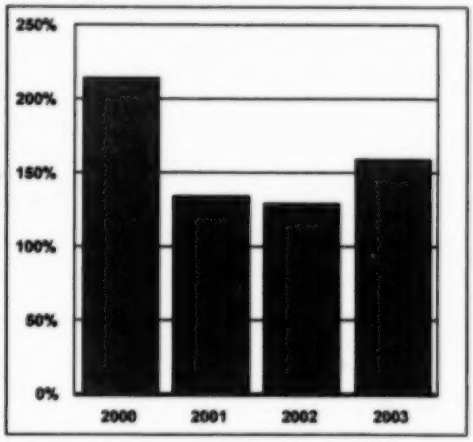
For 2003-04, there were 5.7 million silviculture credits for silviculture activities on small private woodlots.

Where do we want to be?

Our target is to have forest sustainability agreements with a total value of 9.0 million silviculture credits in place by 2004-05 to support silviculture activities on small private woodlots.

Required Value of Silviculture on Private and Industrial Lands Completed

Wood supply sustainability can be managed effectively through an aggressive silviculture program. The department monitors wood harvesting and forecasts long term wood supply by incorporating both harvesting and silviculture data into the forecast. During the last decade there has been much pressure placed on private woodlots to support the provincial demand for wood. Maintaining an adequate level of silviculture will provide for a future supply of wood on private woodlots.



What does this measure tell us?

The measure tells us whether the level of silviculture activity being carried out, compared to the required amount, is sufficient to balance forest harvesting on private and industrial lands.

Where are we now?

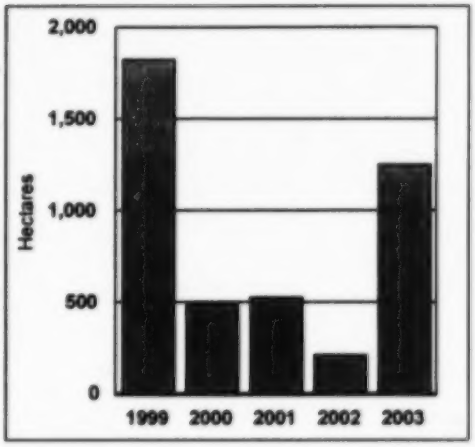
During 2003, approximately 9.6 million silviculture credits were required and about 15.2 million credits were claimed. As a result, completed silviculture was 159% of the required amount.

Where do we want to be?

The department's target for this measure for 2004 is 100% or greater (this measure is calculated on a calendar year basis).

Area of Forest Resource Lost to Fires

Forest fires are a regular occurrence in Nova Scotia resulting in the loss of forest resources. The provincial government is responsible for forest fire protection on all land tenures. The importance of reduction of loss to fire is particularly important on private land where woodlots supply more than 50% of the provincial wood supply.



What does this measure tell us?

An important strategy in reducing the loss of wood supply to forest fires is to respond quickly and keep fires small. While the number of forest fires in Nova Scotia is often similar from year to year, the number of large fires can vary considerably. The measure represents the total area lost to fires annually.

Where are we now?

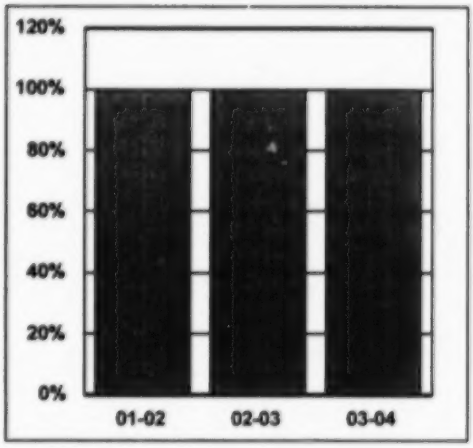
During 2003 the area lost to forest fires was 1,257 hectares.

Where do we want to be?

The target identified for 2004-05 for this measure was 1,014 hectares. The department's annual target for this measure has been adjusted so that it is based on the historic area burned. This target is 120% of the 1999 ten year average area burned. Most forest fires are kept to one hectare or less in size. However one large fire can significantly increase the ten year average. The department feels that the ten year average of 845 hectares from 1999, plus an additional 20% allowance, is a reasonable figure to use as a target. With this measure, we want to be as far below the target as possible. Response time of fire suppression crews in combination with early reporting are key factors to maintaining small fire size. Weather conditions have a significant influence on the number of fires and the area burned.

Review of Hunting / Trapping Regulations

The sustainable and equitable use of harvested wildlife species can be partially achieved with a frequent review of the wildlife regulations which provide the legal framework for hunting and trapping activities.



What does the measure tell us?

The outcome is expressed as the percent of the total regulations under the *Wildlife Act* which were reviewed during the fiscal year. This review is based on the monitoring of wildlife populations, consultations with stakeholders and feedback from DNR staff and is carried out by an internal committee composed of wildlife managers, enforcement personnel, licensing and legal staff. This wildlife regulations committee reviews these inputs for all regulations under the *Wildlife Act* and provides recommendations for changes to provide for the conservation and sustainable use of wildlife. Hunting and trapping opportunities contribute to provincial economic activity and quality of life for Nova Scotians while providing sustainable wildlife populations.

Where are we now?

For 2003-04, 100% of the regulations were reviewed.

Where do we want to be?

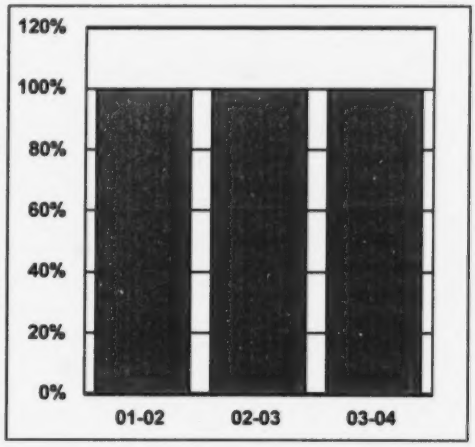
The department's target is 100% for this measure for 2004-05. A mechanism is currently in place to review 100% of the relevant wildlife regulations on an annual basis and our target for this measure is to maintain our capacity to review 100% of the regulations with meaningful information related to biological, stakeholder and public inputs. Wildlife population data, stakeholder interests and public demands need to be effectively collected and analyzed in order to make effective recommendations for changes.

Review of Mineral Related Acts and Regulations
The province's mineral resources are administered using a number of acts and regulations.

What does this measure tell us?
Ensuring that the department's regulatory framework for minerals is as up to date as possible will result in efficient and streamlined processes for the department and its clients.

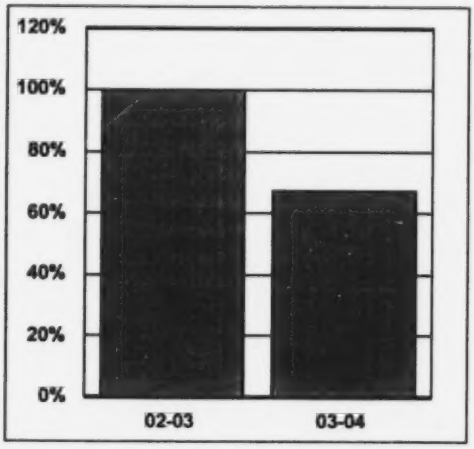
Where are we now?
During 2003-04, 100% of the department's mineral related acts and regulations had been reviewed during the last five years.

Where do we want to be?
The department's target for this measure for 2004-05 is to maintain a level of 100%.



Percentage of "One Window" Interdepartmental Committee Meetings Held Within Three Weeks of Receipt of Request

The "One Window" process formalizes how the various government departments, involved in reviewing mine development activities, function as a committee to make the review process more efficient and effective for both government and the mining industry. The process includes initial meetings with government representatives; registration and completion of the Environmental Assessment process; and application and submission of information for the necessary mineral rights, permits, and approvals. The "One Window" process also monitors ongoing mining operations through regular meetings of government representatives.



What does this measure tell us?

This measure tells us the department's success at providing timely decision making with respect to mineral development projects.

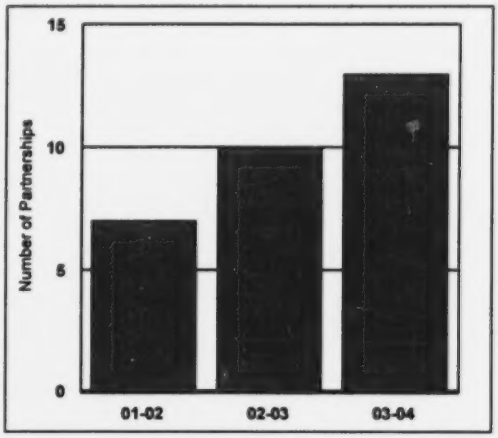
Where are we now?

During 2003-04, 100% of the "One Window" Interdepartmental Committee meetings were held within three weeks of the receipt of a request.

Where do we want to be?

The department's target for this measure for 2004-05 is to continue to maintain a level of 100%.

Parks Related Partnerships
Through promoting and arranging parks related partnership agreements, and tracking the number in existence, the department can measure the growth in the availability of outdoor recreation opportunities.



What does the measure tell us?
The number of parks related partnerships indicates the level of community participation in partnership arrangements with the department to develop the province's natural outdoor recreation resources.

Where are we now?
As of March 31, 2004 there were 13 partnership arrangements in place to assist the department in managing and delivering various outdoor recreation opportunities, up from 10 at the end of the previous year.

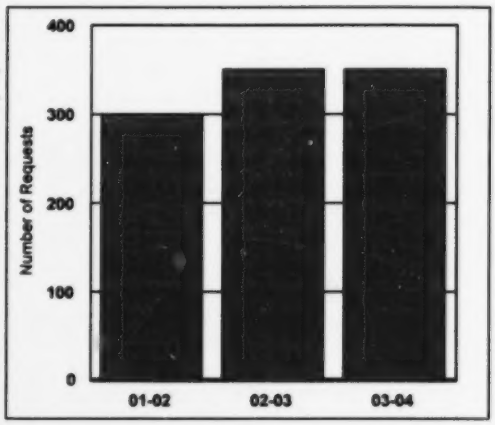
Where do we want to be?
No specific numeric target was originally set for this measure. However, directionally, the department would like to increase the number of parks related partnership arrangements in place. Additional partners at the community level will contribute to an expansion of the provincial park system and provide new economic development related opportunities throughout the province.

Mineral Development Partnerships

This measure was dropped as a departmental level measure in the department's 2004-05 Business Plan. The measure was originally intended to give indication of the department's success at identifying and joining with partners (provincial government departments, municipal governments, and regional development agencies) to promote mineral development projects, and to raise the level of awareness and understanding of these projects and of the importance of considerations of local geological conditions in all land use decisions. Although there have been some very successful partnerships, there are often factors beyond the department's control which limit our ability to reach new agreements.

Requests for Geoscience Related Technical Information and Assistance

The level of exploration in Nova Scotia by the private sector for new mineral and hydrocarbon resources at any given time is a reflection of the interaction of a number of variables, with many of these variables outside the province's sphere of influence. What can be done is to monitor activities which are intended to increase the awareness by government departments, regional development agencies, prospectors, developers, and mining companies of mineral and hydrocarbon resource development opportunities in the province.



What does this measure tell us?

One such activity is promoting and providing easy access to the professional expertise of departmental geologists, who provide information, advice and counsel. By recording the levels of this activity, the department measures the awareness of the province's mineral and hydrocarbon potential by the resource industry and their level of interest. Year-by-year increases in requests for information are indications that (1) more clients are aware of the department's expertise and (2) clients consider the information and advice to be credible and useful.

Where are we now?

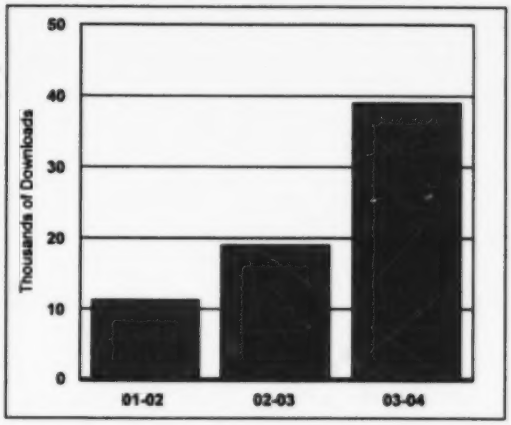
During 2003-04, 350 requests for information and technical assistance were received by staff.

Where do we want to be?

The department's target for this measure for 2004-05 is 400 requests.

Downloads of Technical Geoscience Information from the Departmental Website

The level of exploration in Nova Scotia by the private sector for new mineral and hydrocarbon resources at any given time is a reflection of the interaction of a number of variables, with many of these variables outside the province's sphere of influence. What can be done is to monitor activities which are intended to increase the awareness by prospectors, developers, and mining companies of mineral and hydrocarbon resource development opportunities in the province. One such activity is promoting and providing easy access to a comprehensive provincial geological and mineral deposit database, which is required by the private sector for the selection of exploration targets and development of exploration strategies.



What does this measure tell us?

By recording the levels of this activity, the department measures the awareness of the province's mineral and hydrocarbon potential by the resource industry and their level of interest. The significance of monitoring downloads of data, rather than the number of visits to the website, is that it is an indication that explorationists are using the database in making decisions about their exploration targets and plans.

Where are we now?

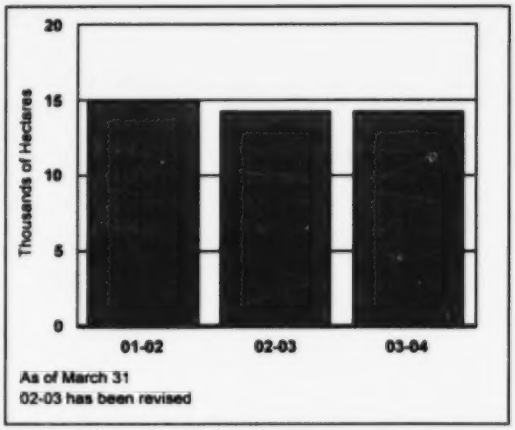
Approximately 39.0 thousand digital data downloads were recorded in 2003-04.

Where do we want to be?

The department's target for this measure for 2004-05 is 15.0 thousand digital downloads.

Area of Designated Provincial Parks

The availability of outdoor recreational opportunities. This measure reports how much land has been designated for park use.



What does the measure tell us?

This measure tracks the area of land designated under the *Provincial Parks Act*. The amount of area of designated parks indicates the provincial commitment to maintaining lands for recreational opportunities and managing these lands accordingly.

Where are we now?

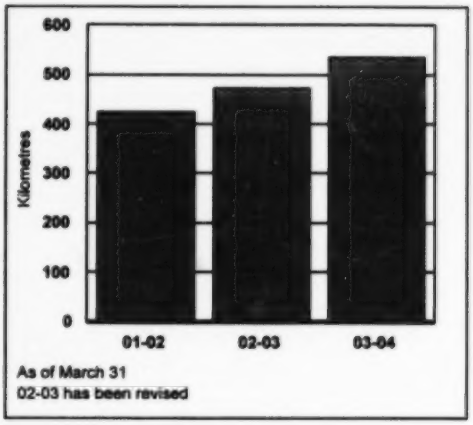
As of March 31, 2004 there were 14,200 hectares of lands that were designated as either parks or park reserves under the *Provincial Parks Act*. The designation of McNabs and Lawlor Islands Provincial Park added 458 hectares to the provincial total in November 2002. However a review of park properties also identified some administrative duplication which, when eliminated, resulted in a reduction in the recorded area of designated provincial parks.

Where do we want to be?

No specific numeric target was originally set for this measure for 2004-05. However directionally the department's target was to increase the area. Through continued community involvement and management planning, additional properties will be identified for designation under the *Provincial Parks Act*.

Length of Trails in Parks and on Crown Lands

The availability of land for trails and the effort put into developing trails provides an indication of trail infrastructure available to provide Nova Scotians and visitors to the province with opportunities to participate in outdoor recreational activities that require recreational trails.



What does the measure tell us?

This measure tracks the length of trails occurring on Crown lands, including trails within provincial parks. The measure indicates specific support for hiking and other outdoor recreational activities. Trail development also measures the level of community support for putting outdoor recreational opportunities in place.

Where are we now?

As of March 31, 2004, 536 kilometres of developed trails were available for use on Crown lands, including approximately 180 kilometres of trails in provincial parks.

Where do we want to be?

The department's target for this measures is 540 kilometres by the end of 2004-05. The length of trails will continue to increase as more opportunities are identified and as government, community groups, and other partners cooperate to create new trails as part of future trail development projects.

Shubenacadie Wildlife Park Visitors

A key role of the department is to promote *public appreciation of natural resources* through participation in *nature related activities*. The Provincial Wildlife Park at Shubenacadie uses animal enclosures in natural settings and educational messages to ensure the visiting public gets a good understanding of Nova Scotia wildlife.

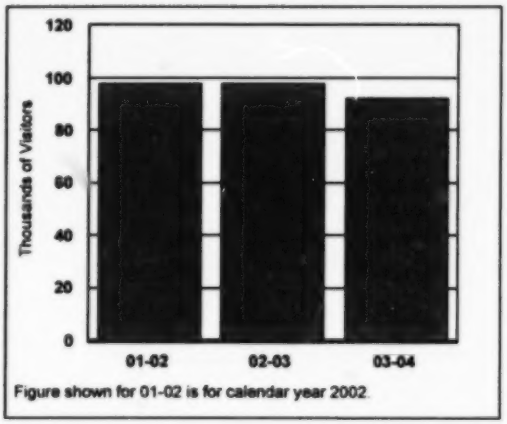


Figure shown for 01-02 is for calendar year 2002.

What does this measure tell us?

Annual attendance figures give an indication of the level of interest of Nova Scotians and visitors to our province in viewing Nova Scotia's wildlife in natural settings. This provides visitors to the Park with both a recreational experience and an opportunity to learn more about the province's wildlife. However a number of factors, including weather, travel trends, and economic conditions, have an effect on visitation.

Where are we now?

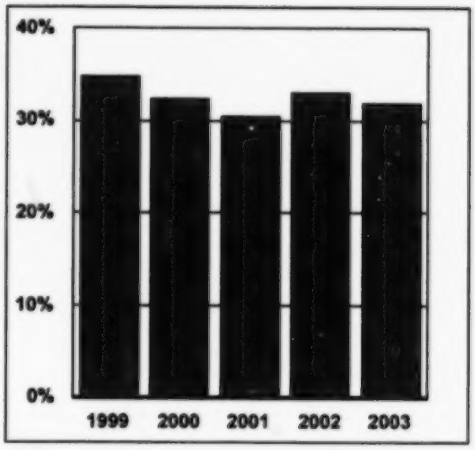
Attendance at the Wildlife Park during 2003-04 was approximately 92 thousand people.

Where do we want to be?

The department's target for 2004-05 for this measure is 100 thousand visitors.

Occupancy Rates at Provincial Camping Parks

The annual occupancy rate for our provincial camping parks measures the degree of utilization of our provincial camping parks and provides an indication of Nova Scotians' (and our visitors') interest in camping.



What does the measure tell us?

The occupancy rate is the percent of total campsites available for use that are actually occupied. This number reflects overall use of our campgrounds and also helps us identify possible new opportunities that can taken advantage of, and deficiencies that can be corrected, through park planning and development.

Where are we now?

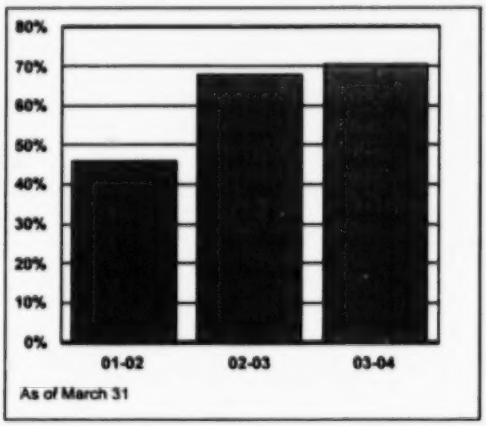
For the 2003 camping season, the occupancy rate was 32%, down marginally from 33% in 2002.

Where do we want to be?

The department identified a target of 38% for the provincial camping park occupancy rate in 2004-05. Increased occupancy at our provincial parks can be achieved through improved client services, marketing and working with other departments and industry stakeholders. Weather is a key determinant of the occupancy rate, as cool or rainy weather during the weekend and at key times of the camping season can drastically reduce the occupancy rate. Changes made in the length of the camping season, where some parks now open earlier in the season and other parks now stay open later in the season have affected the occupancy rate since the peak camping months are normally July and August.

Review of Land Related Acts, Regulations and Policies

As custodian of the Province's Crown lands, a key component is an up to date regulatory structure for these lands.



What does the measure tell us?

Crown land is administered using a number of acts, regulations and policies. Some acts relate to private land issues as well. Ensuring that they are as up to date as possible will result in efficient and streamlined processes for the department and its clients.

Where are we now?

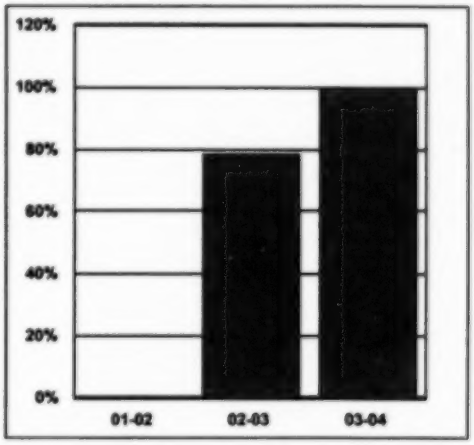
As of March 31, 2004, there were 28 acts and policies used to administer Crown lands (and some aspects of private lands). Of these, 19 (or 70%) had received either a complete or partial review during the last five years.

Where do we want to be?

The department originally identified a target of 50% for 2004-05. This target has been increased to 65% due to the implementation of a number of policies in recent years which have been included in the measure.

Main DNR Offices Able to Access Crown Land Information Electronically

The department is the custodian of most of the Province's Crown lands, so it is important for staff to be able to electronically access accurate, up to date information on these lands.



What does the measure tell us?

Information is crucial to all Crown land administration activities. Historically, the storage and dissemination of information about Crown land has been accomplished through a paper based system. As more and more Crown land information is created, stored and available electronically, land administration will be more modern and efficient.

Where are we now?

As of March 31, 2004, Crown land information (GIS) was available to staff in the department's Head Office in Halifax, the three regional offices (in Bridgewater, Coxheath, and Truro), three main program offices (in Kentville, Truro, and Belmont) and seven other locations where Crown Land Survey offices are situated, or 100% of the 14 target offices.

Where do we want to be?

The department originally identified a target of 100% of seven main departmental office locations by 2004-05. Office locations included were: DNR's head office in Halifax, the three regional offices in Bridgewater, Truro, and Coxheath, respectively, the Wildlife Division in Kentville, the Forestry Division in Truro, and the Parks and Recreation Division in Belmont. This measure was increased to 14 offices by including seven other Crown Land Survey offices.